



## Original Article

### Health Promoting Behaviors and General Health among the Elderly in Qazvin: A Cross Sectional Study

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#### ABSTRACT

##### Article history

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**Introduction:** Health promoting behaviors (HPBs) are one of the main criteria to determine health. HPBs have a complex nature and are influenced by several factors. The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between HPBs and general health in the elderly in Qazvin.

**Methods:** In this cross-sectional study, 372 older people were enrolled using convenience sampling. Data were collected using demographic information questionnaire, HPBs checklist, and Goldberg and Hillier's 12-items of the General Health Questionnaire. Data were analyzed by independent t-test and chi-square test.

**Results:** The results showed that 21% of the elderly were not in a desirable general health status. Walking (61%) and using low-fat foods (73.9%) were among the most uncommon HPBs while lack of alcohol consumption (97%) and blood pressure control (95.4%) were among the most common HPBs. The elderly who walked reported a significantly higher general health ( $P < 0.001$ ), while the elderly who reported using low-salt ( $P = 0.008$ ) and low-fat ( $P = 0.008$ ) diet had a significantly lower general health.

**Conclusion:** While the rate of doing certain HPBs, such as walking, was not good, almost 80% of the subjects were in a satisfactory general health status. Efforts to expand and improve HPBs, especially walking, in the elderly can affect their general health status.

**Keywords:** Health, Aged, Health Promotion, Behavior

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#### Introduction

Health promotion has recently been considered a necessary strategy to reduce inequalities in health and providing high quality primary care (1). Prevention and health promotion programs for the elderly have expanded greatly. These programs focus on improving the general health of the elderly and encouraging self-care for chronic diseases (2). Health Promoting behaviors (HPBs) are a set of behaviors that a person is following or believing in to promote his/her health or prevent disease (3).

HPBs, including no smoking, lack of alcohol consumption, walking and exercise, consuming low-salt and low-fat foods, fresh vegetables and fruits, milk, meat (2-3 servings a day), controlling blood pressure and controlling health status, are complex in nature and are influenced by several factors (4) so that those who adopt HPBs, can prevent disease and improve their physical functioning, quality of life, and life expectancy. Following proper nutrition programs and eating appropriate and adequate food as part of

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